

## New Creation

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There is a deeper purpose and nobler work in God than creation. Creation occupied His hand, and displayed His power and Godhead, and was then, in some sense, left at man's disposal, so that its condition was to be determined by the allegiance or rebellion of man. But there was another work ordered in the counsels of God before the world, to be accomplished in due time, with which God joined Himself, and thus never suffered it to fail. This purpose and work are laid in and effectuated by the Word, who is with God, and is God. The opening of Genesis shows us the work of creation, and creation entrusted to man; the opening of St. John shows us the Word, who was before creation, and the work accomplished by Him. Blessed joy to look at either Himself or His work! May our souls now taste this while doing so. It is grateful to the heart to turn that way when wearied with self — with man and his doings — with the world and its vanities. The living waters then, as it were, recede to their native bed, for such indeed is the action of the Spirit in the saint when he retires to God and His Word. The new mind finds its home there.

I would follow this work of redemption or New Creation by the Word through a few meditations which lead the thoughts of the soul that way. But it is not the effort of mind even on Scripture which I desire to trust, but the more artless confidence that can follow where His Word and Spirit lead, remembering the while assuredly that the diligent soul shall be made fat, and that Paul has counselled Timothy to meditate on these things.

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Our meditations, then, on New Creation may lead us, in the first place, to the subject of sin. St. Paul treats it in a very lively and energetic style in Romans 5, 6. He gives it a kind of life and office, as it were; treating it as a person and as king. He shows us that it entered this world through man's disobedience; and, having entered it, at once took the seat of government, and death became both the power and character of its kingdom.

And this is the aspect of "this present evil world." It is the place or scene of the reign of sin and death, and nothing is left untouched by its influence. Such has been the entrance, and such is the present power of sin in this world. But there is another action in this same world, as our apostle further shows us — of which the *grace of God* is the source, as the disobedience of man has been the source of the presence and reign of sin. And this grace through Christ has brought in righteousness and life; as disobedience in Adam opened the door to sin and death. And having entered, the apostle shows us still further that righteousness does more than merely measure the power of sin, for sin came in upon one offence; but righteousness comes in, and sweeps away from the scene thousands of offences which followed in the train of that one, and accordingly it has its kingdom now also. Life has its action here as well as death, but it is not visible like the other. The reign of sin is *felt*, and the power of death is *seen* all abroad — the reign of righteousness which brings life with it, is as yet only known to faith. But grace is triumphant — it has brought in a gift, a righteousness which asserts, through Jesus, its supremacy over all the aggravated power of sin and death. And how was this? How could grace thus take its way? How could righteousness and life enter a scene \*here sin was reigning unto death, and had title so to reign? Our apostle shows us that a victim has been provided by grace, and rendered up to the claims of sin. Sin reigned unto death. Death may bound his empire, but up to death he has title to exercise his power. And Jesus, the Son of God, has owned his title — "He died *unto* sin;" He took the

penalty — He received the wages of man's departure from God. — "In the day thou eatest thou shalt die." Man did eat, but Jesus also died. And thus Jesus owned the rights, and yielded to the exactions of sin. He had to do with it in His death. He was then dealing with it — righteously bowing under its dominion. But all the while He was the Son of the living God. He had life in Himself, life untouched by Adam's disobedience; and thus He outlived the stroke of sin, and destroyed him that had the power of death; and asserted a kingdom of righteousness and life, in which, not only He reigns, but all those reign with Him who, by faith, rejoice in His victory.

Thus sin and death in their dominion are overthrown. The Son of the living God has asserted His supremacy in the very region of the power of sin. Sin has reigned unto death — even to the death of Christ on the cross; but there sin was met by righteousness — there death was abolished by life. All that sin could command, and that was death, it got there — there it exacted death of Jesus; but Jesus carried a life in Him which remained untouched by all this, and in that life, and the righteousness from whence it flowed, He and His saints reign for ever together.

Thus has sin been disposed of. It entered and reigned, but has now been set aside; and we have not to own it in any wise, but to be dead to it. For we are in union with the Son of God, and as His death was "unto sin," His resurrection was "unto God." As it is written, "In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God;" and our union with Him being in resurrection as well as in death, we are thus "alive unto God," and should so account ourselves. We should assert our places in the risen Son of God, and know that we are dead to sin, our old man being crucified, and that we have nothing more to do with it. Sin may seek to have to do with us, but we are to reckon ourselves as dead to it — to see it as sunk in the flesh — as deposited in that pit out of which we have risen in Christ, separated from it, leaving it to perish in its own corruption; and, in the faith of our place in Christ, to say of it and all its workings in the flesh — "Yet not I, but sin that dwelleth in me." Sin was once a king, as we have seen, reigning unto death, and using the members of man as the instruments of its power, but now faith apprehends it as imprisoned in the flesh, sunk in that pit where all shall perish.

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We are thus introduced to thoughts on the *flesh* thus in close connection with sin. And the Scripture teaches much upon it, showing us clearly, as indeed our last meditation might lead us to anticipate, that the saint has entirely renounced it. May it be so more and more in our conduct, beloved, as it is thus fully in our calling.

The flesh of Jesus, I judge, carried in it the real enmity between Jew and Gentile, inasmuch as it was the only flesh that was ever really *circumcised*; or inasmuch as Jesus was the only *real Jew* who ever lived — the only child of man that *ever really separated* or *consecrated* the *human nature* to God, keeping in Himself the "law of commandments contained in ordinances." And thus in Himself He separated flesh from all beside, and that was the true "partition wall," the true witness against all else that was of man as uncircumcised. (Eph. 2)

But His flesh — or flesh in such a One — is now gone. We do not know Him after the flesh. All His perfectness in it led Him to the cross, contributing with other personal worthiness to His fitness to die there for us. But having now died there, His cross is the end of all flesh. That cross was endured for us. It was the wages of sin that was in our flesh, and slew the enmity that was between God and men accordingly.

But something beside or beyond flesh is therefore to be looked for now, and so we find it; for now Christ is found in resurrection, and Jew and Gentile are equally and together presented to God as *spirit*, or as *New Creation* "a new man in Christ Jesus" — "one body" — the body of their risen Christ.

The law had previously come to seek something good *in the flesh* - to get out of it fruit unto God. But it found none. The Son came, on the other hand, not looking for good in it, but to make atonement for it — to hang on the cursed tree as the representative of it. ( Rom. 8) Paul had in his doctrine accordingly done with it altogether. Could he return to it when he saw it thus disposed of by the Son of God? He could not. He saw it to be a mighty wreck — it may be as yet not entirely buried out of sight., or gone to the bottom — but He was no longer *in it*, but in the *risen Son of God*. He had been cut on a new world, where God's eye rests with delight for ever — he was in a new creation with the risen Son of God.

And if he had done with the flesh, he had done also with the law; for they were one, as being bound together — the old husband and wife, as he speaks in Rom. 7. The law — with its strictures, and forbiddings, and demands — was as the ropes and tacklings, and the rudder-bands of that which, as I have said, he had now left as a wreck, and if the vessel be behind him, so is all the provision.

And as he would not glory in his own flesh, neither would he in that of another. If he were crucified to the world, so was the world to him. And it is, indeed, edifying to observe the strength with which he renounces the flesh. There is nothing which the flesh has incurred, or is exposed to — nothing that it possesses — nothing that it can do — that he does not declare his *escape from* or renunciation of, in fullest strength and confidence of faith in Jesus. Thus, is the flesh subject to *condemnation*? Yes, but Jesus has borne the judgment of it, and the believer, through grace, is not regarded as in the flesh but in the spirit — it is not he who does the deeds of his own condemned flesh, which is thus exposed to judgment, but it is "sin" that dwells. in him (Rom 7, 8). Has the flesh *its religion*? He counts it all as loss and dung — its ordinances and observances, and legal circumcision; its bonds and fears he renounces, and is found only in the righteousness of God by faith. (Gal., Phil., Col.) Has the flesh its *wisdom*? Yes, the world has its princes — the wise, the scribe, and the disputer - but Paul insists that God has made it all foolishness, and desires only that wisdom which the Spirit alone could search out and reveal, and which no eye, nor ear, nor heart of mere man could converse with (1 Cor. 1, 2). Has the flesh its *excellency of speech* and other advantages which ministry of the Word might use? Yes, but he would use none of them; but as he was a minister *of* the Spirit, so would he be a minister *in* the Spirit only (2 Cor.). Thus \*he escapes from it, or renounces it in *all* its pretensions and in all its exposure. It was an attempt to revive the wisdom of the flesh, or the power of the flesh in ministry, with which he had to contend at Corinth; and it was an attempt to revive the religion of the flesh, which he withstood in Galatia and at Colosse. But he put no confidence' in anything that was of it. He was not in it, but in One who was raised from the dead. He was in Christ, in New Creation or the Spirit He had his justification in the blood of the Son of God and his personal graces and ministerial powers in the Holy Ghost, and there only. And this glorious act of faith, which thus leaves the flesh — in its condemnation, its religion, its endowments, its everything — behind us, is our strength in standing against its lusts and its *tempers*; for when such arise to tempt the soul, the soul should gird itself with this remembrance, that we have done with it altogether. And the same thing is our strength in walking in the charities of the gospel, for it accustoms us to look at that which is of the flesh in our brethren (and which is the trial of our Christian charities) as not being properly themselves, but something which they have in real principle renounced.

And it has struck me from Gal. 1: 13 to 16, that St. Paul tells us that God's great purpose by him was to give proof of the profitlessness of the flesh in its best estate, and of the entire renunciation, accordingly, by the divinely taught soul. For after there showing his advantages in fleshly religion (as he does also in Phil. 3), he tells us God had "separated him from his mother's womb," — then "called him" — then "revealed His Son in him" — by which separation I judge that he means his election to be

the minister and representative of a gospel that was not to allow any conference with or confidence in the flesh at all; and accordingly all his previous life — before he was actually called to such ministry — had been a gathering together and exhibiting of advantages in the flesh, that now he might make a more glorious renunciation of them. Hence he was born a "Hebrew of the Hebrews." Hence he was "circumcised the eighth day." Hence he "profited in the Jews' religion," and persecuted the church through fleshly zeal. Hence he was "touching the law" blameless. All this had marked the man who had been separated from his mother's womb, and thus fitted him for showing out afterwards the vanity of all that was fleshly; so that when he was actually called into ministry to do so, he might be able to tell us how much in it, and of it, he had had — that his renunciation of it might be the more marked. It was like the fitting of the vessel for the 'glory it was destined to carry, or the instrument for the work it was ordained to execute, so that we might be able to see that if *flesh* in Paul was *nothing*, flesh in any other must surely be *nothing*. Paul was apprehended to make the greatest attainments in it, that he might renounce it altogether, and thus expose its utter and certain vanity. And I would here notice two instances in our Lord's ministry, in which He, in like manner, strikingly denounces the flesh.

John 3 — He sets the flesh aside in the words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," because He connects with this the need of man being born again of water and the Spirit. John 6 — He again sets the flesh aside in the words, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." And from His conversations on these two occasions with Nicodemus and with the multitude, we learn how we are to renounce the flesh, and that is, by learning God or Christ *as sinners*. Neither Nicodemus nor the multitude came to Jesus *as sinners*, and therefore He had to tell both of them of the worthlessness of the flesh.

And this leads us to this most needed and precious lesson very simply and very surely. It is the *sinner* who comes to Jesus as such, under conviction of sin, that renounces the flesh. Happy, simple, and precious result for our souls of all this needed primary truth — the worthlessness of the flesh and its consequent renunciation — that the way to attain this truth is to learn God as *sinners*.

Our death is the judgment or end of the flesh - - "the body is dead because of sin." There is judgment afterwards, but that belongs to God, and is the trial and condemnation of the secrets of the hearts, or according to man's works, as written in the Books; but of flesh or fallen nature of man, as injured and tainted by disobedience, death is the judgment: the flesh perisheth in its own corruption.

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As connected with this which we have just meditated on, I would now for a little consider *the law*.

The law addresses itself only to the *flesh*, for it has dominion over a man only so long as he liveth. But as in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, all the application of the law to it only serves to bring out increased evil. This is Romans 7. It is like cultivating a piece of ground which has only noxious seed in it; the more you manure it, the more abundant harvest of thorns and thistles you get from it. So the more exact we are under the law, the more actually are we cast at a distance from God. St. Paul seems to have this thought in Phil. 3. All the features of his former condition, or when he was under the law, or in the flesh, were in his favour, or to his praise. He speaks of them as being so — and among these was his *zeal* — a right zeal under the law, but directly contrary to God, for it exercised itself in persecution of the church.

For zeal under *the law* must exercise itself against the church — for the church lives in grace. Zeal in the *flesh* must exercise itself against the church, for the church walks in *the Spirit*. And thus the more praise Paul had from the law or the flesh, the more was he in collision with God. It is quite true

that there is a certain using of the law which is, on the other hand, according to God. Thus Zecharias and Elisabeth walked in all its ordinances and commandments blameless. But that was owning of it simply as *God's dispensation for the time*, as the school-master, till faith came. That was according to God. But taking up the law as *the thing*, threw Paul (and must so throw all who do it) into direct enmity with God and His purposes, and into a denial of His truth; for it denies the corruption of the flesh, the grace of God, and God's purpose from the beginning to act on promise. It exalts man: it nourishes that nature of which the truth says, "In it there dwells no good thing." And all this did Paul when under the law, so that when he was enlightened and came under grace, his estimate of himself was altogether changed; then he says of himself that he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1). Then he learns the value of his former gains — that they were all loss (Phil. 3). They had been advantages in the flesh, but the flesh being *evil*, the more it is advantaged and nourished, the further are we from the *good*. And this good thing he Row learns is only, in Christ, in the Spirit., or the new life; to nourish and exercise which became from that moment his one great care and business (Phil. 3).

In Romans 7, to which I already referred, the apostle, as it were, entertains the claims of the law upon the believer, and he shows that they have been already answered and disposed of. And he does this very simply. He says that the authority of the law addresses itself only to a living man — that is, a man *in the flesh*. It is the flesh, or man as born of Adam, that the law was given to. But the *believer* has ceased, in *this sense*, to be a living man, has ceased to be of Adam, inasmuch as he has died and risen again; and consequently, being a *dead and risen* man, and not a *living* man, the law does not address its claims to him — he is not *the object* of the law.

But in this the law is not spoken of in the same *relation* to us as sin had been. Sin had been spoken of as a master or a king, but the law is here spoken of as a husband. And in the close of this chapter, having thus shown how that both sin and the law have been disposed of or set aside the one as a master, the other as a husband — the apostle tells us they have been discharged with very different characters indeed. Sin has been discharged with as *bad* — the law with as *good* a character as ever the inspired pen of an apostle could write for them. All evil in us is, declared to have come from the one, while from the other nothing flowed but that which was holy, just, and good. And the moment the real character of the law was understood by the quickened soul, a grievous state of things arose: the commandment came — sin revived — and the man died. The law was felt to urge one thing upon the conscience — sin was felt to exact another thing in the old man or the members — and this state of things drew forth the sense of death in the soul and cry for deliverance; and the answer came in Jesus, revealed in the power of His death and resurrection.

Thus the law, coming to act on flesh or man in moral corruption, was found altogether unequal, through the inbred, essential evil that was there; and rather aggravating the mischief by showing sin also as transgression. It has been disclaimed. The Lord has disclaimed it as His instrument; and the believer, who stands in the mind of the Lord, has disclaimed it as his confidence, and Christ has come, the instrument in God's hand instead of the law, and the object of the believer's confidence instead of it also.

Man, and the law that acted on him, being thus put aside, *God* is introduced into the scene, and His instruments and ordinances. And as thus introduced, I desire to look at God for Himself a little moment, as Scripture may blessedly show Him thus in the gracious service of poor ruined man.

God is that glorious One (not to speak of Him merely in Himself, or in creation and providence, or amid the powers and thrones of angels) who has resources for our need, and remedy for our mischief, though we be those helpless sinners which the law has proved us to be. To carry such in

Himself is His prerogative, and our owning it by faith is at once His praise and our blessing. It is as such He is proposed to faith. It was "God Almighty," that is, God the all-sufficient One, that was revealed to the Patriarchs. Abraham and Sarah were *dead* as to their bodies; but I am the "Almighty God," says the Lord, and their faith owned it. "I have resources to meet the dead state of your bodies." was the language of God, and His servant bowed his head (Gen. 17).

This was claiming *divine* glory on the one hand, and giving it on the other. And as the reverse of this, the apostle charges some with not having "the knowledge of God," because they questioned the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15: 34). For such questioning showed that they had not apprehended God *as God* — that they had not given Him due divine glory — otherwise they would have believed that He had *resources* even for a state of *death*, as Abraham did. As the Lord before condemns the Sadducees on the very same point, as not knowing the power of God (Matt. 22: 29).

We are thus to give God His honour; we are not only to refuse our confidence to any beside, but we are to give it Him. Just as in Israel. It was not only that the land was to be cleansed of idols and groves, but a house or tabernacle was to be raised to God. Idol deities were to be removed, but the one true God Almighty was also to be brought in. It would not have done simply to clear the land of abominations without also bringing in the true glory, and so exactly with us now. We are not only to flee idolatry, but to become true worshippers: we are not only to refuse our confidence as sinners to all beside, whether to our works, or our penances, or the church, or righteousness of man of any kind, but we are to give our confidence, as sinners, to God. We do not know Him or worship Him *as God*, if we do not apprehend Him as worthy of that confidence, as One who has resources in Himself for our condition, though it be like Abraham's, a condition of death, even of death in trespasses and sins. For God is One who can meet *all* necessities. That is His divine glory. A mere convicted sinner may have cleared the land of idols the thought of saying himself by the law may be hateful to him — he may renounce it with all zeal Like the sword of Joshua, he may go from city to city, and from king to king, and demolish and kill all that he finds in the land. But it is only the *believing* sinner that finishes Joshua's work, by putting the tabernacle of the Lord at Shiloh; and thus, while Ashtoreth and Baalim are removed, Jehovah is brought in — the full and worthy honours which are God's are given Him.

To come short of this is really to come short of knowledge of *God*. It is for *God* the apostle pleads in 1 Cor. 15. It is not for the Father, nor for the Son, nor for the Holy Ghost.. The rights and honours of each of the Blessed Persons in the Godhead, the apostle, as instructed, knew how to maintain in their due place. But there it is *God* he pleads for — and that is the highest thought in some sense: and accordingly he touches, in the holy argument, on the closing dispensation of "God all in all." The glory that first broke out is. seen at the last. "In the beginning *God* created the heavens and the earth." "When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that *God* may be all in all." But with this ineffably, inconceivably excellent advantage, that in the march of this glory, from the beginning to the end, it has unfolded and displayed itself in such ways as are never to be forgotten; but which the rather have left their traces, their indelible traces, behind them for ever.

The glory has passed before us, showing itself to us increasingly in its progress; and when at the end we see it, the glory *still*, it is as having thoroughly opened itself, so that we may enjoy it in all its fulness, in its inner parts and secrets, through the eternity of the new heaven and the new earth.

And I might refer to Gal. 4: 8 as giving this view of God, that the disciples there, by returning to observances, and in that way sustaining their confidence as *sinners*, were showing that they were leaving God and the knowledge of Him, because, if known duly, they would have seen that He had all that was needed by them even as sinners, and that days and months and years would therefore add

nothing to them.

We all come short, sadly so, for our own soul's joy, in this knowledge of *God* according to His revelation of Himself — which is the only true or divine knowledge. He is of unspeakably blessed perfections, and most glorious is His goodness. He is love, as we read; and, therefore, every defect or mistake in the understanding of Him must reduce our joy and blessing, for love secures them to perfection.

The glory and delight of God in the works of His hands do not result so much from their own proper excellence, or because they display His handiwork. But His glory and delighted are rather in them, because of their either imparting or receiving blessing; for such are the delights of love.

Thus the heavens, with the sun running its course through them, glorifies and delights Him, chiefly because they set themselves forth in blessing to the earth. And they are called His "witnesses," because they give the fruitful seasons which fill the heart with gladness.

So the church. It is not the gifts of His Spirit as displays of His power, but as serving His saints, and edifying them in light and comfort, that forms His value of them and delight in them. Accordingly St. Paul, carrying the mind of God with Him, says, "I would rather speak five words with my understanding — that I might teach others also — than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Tongues were more the exhibition of *power* — prophesying for the edification of the saints — and the apostle, having the mind of God, did therefore value the latter. And the nearer we are in spirit to God, the more we shall find our delight thus in blessing. Look at Gabriel. He stood "in the presence of God." In what character then did he come forth from that presence? As the messenger of glad tidings to the earth (Luke 1: 19.)

So the Beloved. He dwelt in the bosom of the Father. in what character and for what end did He come forth from that bosom? To give Himself up to the death of the cross for the rescue and life of sinners.

The nearer the Son the Beloved lay, the brighter was the expression of love or of God. The bosom was a place more intimate than the presence; and so was the *death* a richer expression of God than the *message*. But *all* this, and the like to it, abounding in Scripture, shows us God. *God is love* — and His glory, or the ways of His showing Himself, are accordingly. *They are ways of blessing*. All that properly came from Him — be it from the outer courts of His presence where servants wait, or the sanctuary of His bosom, where the Beloved lay, the divine, eternal Son; be it in the gifts of His spirit in the church, or in the works of His hands in creation — all in their divers measures and glories come forth to tell of Him in *blessing*, to reflect His person in diffusing fruits of liberty and gladness around.

Thus we reach our God in divine understanding. And it is *very blessed* thus to see that the *knowledge* of God once associated itself with the *certainty* of *our own blessing*, so that to be without "hope" is to be without "God" (Eph. 2). And to refuse salvation, that is, not to obey the gospel, is the same, and will be judged the same as not knowing God (2 Thess. 1). GOD IS NOT KNOWN when the gospel is preached, if that gospel be not received by faith or obeyed. But all this is blessed. It casts the soul, as it were, on the necessity of blessing. God must be given up otherwise, for to know Him is to know *blessing* from Him.. If I refuse the salvation of the gospel, I refuse God. I am without God in the world. If the soul has apprehended Him, it has apprehended One who blesses. And thus, as Scripture teaches, to know Him is life eternal (John 17: 3) To know Him more and more is only the increasing communication of grace and peace (2 Peter 1: 2). Sad it is, that He, being such a One, our souls have such short, and cold, and weak tales to tell of Him.

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God is thus led up to our thoughts as acting in a fallen world where man had been found out by the law to be helpless as well as evil. It now becomes us to look at the way and action of the blessed God in such a world, and for such a creature as man, and that has been, and is *redemption*.

Redemption is God's principle in this world. Creation was for redemption, and not redemption after creation — because in counsel the Lamb offered Himself before the world was (Ps. 40, Heb. 10). And the saints are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1). And in the garden of Eden itself, before the transgression, in the sleeping man, and the woman taken out of him, there was, the type of redemption or life drawn out of death (Gen. 2); and the moment sin entered, the secret of redemption was published (Gen. 3: 15).

But beside all this, Leviticus 25, which is the special Scripture upon redemption, shows us, as I have observed, that redemption was God's principle; for there we are taught that neither the people nor the land could be sold for ever, but always subject to redemption, or, as we say, by way of mortgage. And if the Israelite had no kinsman able or willing to redeem him or his land, the Lord Himself would redeem both in the fiftieth year or year of jubilee. Thus it is clearly apparent that redemption is God's principle. But what does it imply? The paying of a price, a full price for the thing or person sold. The purchaser of an Israelite, or of his possession, was to have the full money weighed out to him ere he could be required to restore the man or his land to the kinsman. The Scripture shows in like manner, that our glorious kinsman (the God of heaven and earth, manifest in the flesh) has by Himself paid the full price of our redemption, paid the debt that lay upon us and our inheritance. For in the balances of the throne of God (where righteousness was seated) the price was weighed, and weighed with the nicest hand, that no wrong might be done to any one through man having sold himself and all that he had by his sin. And thus Scripture calls Jesus a *redeemer*, in the sense of this glorious chapter on redemption (Lev. 25). He visited and redeemed His people. And the price that He paid was His blood, or Himself. "He gave *himself* a ransom for many ransom for all — to be testified in due time." "By his *blood* having obtained eternal *redemption* for us." "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." And many such passages tell us.

And the scales of the throne of God tested the weight of this price before it was paid. They had before tried the weight of the blood of bulls and goats, but they found all such blood to be light and insufficient. But when the blood of God's own Lamb, God's divine Son, was put into that balance, which was thus held by the hand of Him that sat on the throne, Who judges right — the balance stood, the will of God, the Great Creditor, was satisfied. And by the satisfying of that will we are sanctified (Heb. 10). By the payment of that price our persons and lands are repurchased by our glorious Redeemer or Kinsman.

I do confess, to touch the doctrine of repurchase or redemption appears to me to touch the *dearest* thought in the mind of God, for it is, as Lev. 25 blessedly shows us, as I have said, His *own* principle. And why is it so dear to Him? Because it glorifies His love, that is, Himself, above everything; for it shows such a way of self-sacrifice in God, that though this ransom, this price of redemption, demanded the Son from His bosom — the Isaac — yet the Isaac was delivered.

And what comfort to the conscience to know that the full price has been paid. What comfort to a poor redeemed Israelite it must have been to know that his creditor, to whom he had sold himself, had been paid *the uttermost farthing* of his demand by his gracious Kinsman. The heart gets comfort from knowing that God's *love* was gratifying itself in the work of our redemption. But the *conscience* gets ease from knowing that God's *righteousness* has been honoured and secured, that the demand of His

throne has been fully answered. And the adequacy of this price of our redemption is variously witnessed to us. I would exhibit the testimonies to it thus:

(1.) Before the world began it was *fixed on* at such a price in the covenant. Its sufficiency was even then recorded in the volume of the Book." (Ps. 40; Heb. 10)

(2.) From the beginning of the world it was *pleaded* at such a price, whether shed on the altars of the worshippers, or put on the lintels of the houses of the redeemed (Gen. 3: 8.; Ex. 12). And as such price it was owned of God.

(3.) At the end of the world it was offered on Calvary, and then in the rending of the veil God *publicly* owned (as before in the volume of the Book He had secretly or in counsel owned) the value of His blood as the ransom or price of redemption.

(4.) It is now preached by the Holy Ghost in the gospel as such sufficient remission of sins (Heb. 10: 15)

(5.) Finally, through eternity, its simple value is to be *our praise*. And thus is the price of our redemption variously witnessed to us. God delighted to own it, it is true. He was glorified in this well-settled purchase: His love was gratified also. The heart, as led by Scripture, may indulge itself in all these blessed thoughts and assurances. But I speak now only of the value that the soul finds in looking at the blood of Jesus as the money or the price paid down for our ransom. The *conscience* gets its desire from that fully answered. As such price, I again observe, the blood is to be trusted. And as such price it is called the "blood of the everlasting covenant," being that consideration — full, adequate, well ascertained and settled consideration — on which the covenant stands; which ratifies it, therefore; which gives it its character of being at once a *holy* and yet *gracious* covenant, a covenant preserving the holy rights or righteousness of God, and yet providing abundant grace for sinners. "This is the new covenant in my blood." No other blood could do. That of bulls and goats had been tried under the law, but it was found light and inadequate. And let me add, that no thoughts of God's love are to interfere with the demands of His righteousness. These demands must be answered, as they have been indeed in this redemption of sinners by the blood of Jesus. God's love. it is true, is without measure. But that love is not a mere emotion, a mere sentiment that can exercise itself as it will. It is rather that which, at an unutterable cost, provided redemption for the guilty, a *righteous* ransom for sinners. Love in God was that which sat down and counted the cost of making *sinners* its object. If we think of love, without believing the provision it made for the demands of righteousness, we are dealing with a sentiment of our own, and not with the blessed revelation of God.

But this rather by the way. I have here principally been considering redemption as that which marks God's purpose, and is the principle of His action in our world. It was His counsel before the foundation of the world, and will be celebrated in the praise that is to surround the throne. for ever and ever.

But in the Scriptural, character of redemption there is more than mere repurchase or ransom. In the ordinances of Israel a redeemer was a well-known personage, and his services, as set forth under the law, were various:

(1.) He had to ransom the person or land of his brother if sold (Lev. 25). This I have been noticing.

(2.) He had to avenge the blood of his brother if shed by a murderer (Num. 35).

(3.) He had to raise up seed to his brother if he had died childless (Deut. 25).

Our blessed Lord Jesus fulfils all these duties, having in grace made Himself our *Kinsman*, by taking on Him the nature and the cause of the "seed of Abraham," though "God our all":-

(1.) He has ransomed or repurchased both us and our inheritance, which had been righteously forfeited to God by transgression, paying the full price, weighing out the uttermost farthing to his most just demands upon us, not indeed in silver and gold, but in His own most precious blood. (See Acts 20: 28; Rom 3: 24, 25. Eph. 1: 7-14; Col. 1: 14; 1 Tim. 2: 6; Heb. 9: 12; Heb. 10: 14; 1 Peter 1: 18, 19.)

(2.) He avenges us on all our enemies, regarding us not as debtors (as in the previous case), but as injured, and as such standing up to judge our wrongs upon them that are against us, whether it be sin the devil death, or hell. (See 1 Cor. 15: 54-57; Col. 2: 15; Heb. 2: 14.)

(3.) He *quickens* us or raises up seed to His brother — rebuilds His kinsman's house, by making us children of God again — a seed which Adam never produced, creating us anew, giving us to be the sons of God, which the flesh never did. (See Rom. 9: 8; Gal. 3) And this is all. These things contain deliverance, life, victory, justification, and all we need; whether we look to ourselves dead in sins, but made alive to God, to God, whom we have wronged and offended, or to the devil, who has beguiled us. This doctrine of a Redeemer is the ancient religion — the only religion from the beginning — to unfold which, in all its incidents and results, is the great theme and purpose of the Book of God.

Thus the Redeemer is the great personage in the Book of God from beginning to end. His work sustains the praise of God for ever. He was revealed long before the law, and has now survived the law — for we are now "dead to the law," but shall live to Him, as we live by Him, for ever.

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This notice of the Redeemer has presented Jesus, the Son of God, to us as Repurchaser, Avenger, and Quickener. Such, as we have seen, were the three characters and duties that belonged to the Kinsman or Redeemer under the law, and which meet all our necessities. But our meditations now must lead us to the *quickening spirit*, or to Jesus, the Kinsman, building up. His brother's house.

At the beginning Adam was the channel of life from God to that family whom God had set up as His image here, over the works of His hands. But sin entered, and death by sin. Then came forth the promise of the woman's seed, who was not only to have His own heel bruised, and to bruise the serpent's head, but also to become the channel of *life* to man now dead in trespasses and sins. And accordingly, by faith, Adam calls his wife "the mother of all *living*," thus owning that the dead sinner must now find life in a newly constituted fountain. Adam, as God's creature, becomes unfruitful to God, and the woman's seed is revealed to faith as the channel (or source) of life.

From that moment faith apprehends this mystery, and looks for life, not to the flesh in Adam, but to the woman's seed. According to this is the mystery of the barren wife, of which we see so much in the Scriptures. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, the wives of three leading Patriarchs, all belong to this class; and their barrenness, healed by the mighty power of God, sets forth the mystery of life received, not of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God — of God, not acting through Adam or flesh, as at the beginning — but in His own way of sovereign grace and power, as through the woman's seed. This is very simple. Hannah, in after time, rehearses the same mystery. So Elisabeth in the times of the New Testament. But at length the true seed of the woman is manifested, begotten indeed as the woman's seed, in the simple, sovereign energy of God, so that all His types now appear to have been but faint resemblances. For it is not a barren wife receiving strength to conceive seed, but a virgin — the new thing in the earth - "a woman encompassing a man" — a woman alone getting seed, according to the very first promise.

This is the new source, the new channel of all life. Jesus, the Son of God. God manifest in the flesh. The word made flesh. The Lord from heaven made the Second Man, and as such "a quickening spirit," out of whom all life is now drawn — the flesh being dead in sin — cut off from the living God.

The first man had been "a living soul." The Second is a "quickenning Spirit." The first had a life subject to death, or subject to be cut off from all communion with God. The second carries a life which has triumphed over death and all its power. The first was of the earth, the second is the Lord from heaven. The first was but *natural*, the second is *spiritual*.

And thus all that live by Him (Jesus) are spiritual. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He is not a living soul, but a quickening Spirit; and His *nature* gives *character* to that life which He communicates, as Adam's earthly nature would have given character to all that derived life out of it, had it not corrupted itself; and as now dead in sin, it gives character to all flesh, which is still taken out of it, and accordingly corrupt and dead as to God.

Thus the Son of God is the "quickenning Spirit," not the Holy Ghost, but Jesus the Son. The Holy Ghost afterwards dwells in the new creature, but that new creature is "in Christ," having derived its life out of Him who is the quickening Spirit. And that which is born of the Spirit being spirit, a distinct principle of life in us, it has its due actings, its own proper faculties and affections. Thus St. Paul speaks of serving in the Spirit (Rom. 1: 9); *living* and *walking* in the Spirit (Gal. 5: 25); *understanding* in the Spirit (Col. 1: 9); *having strength or faculty to comprehend* in the Spirit (Eph. 3: 17); having a *conscience* in the Spirit (Rom. 9: 1); *living* in the Spirit (Col. 1); having *bowels* in the Spirit (Phil. 1: 8). These are a few instances wherein the Spirit is owned as a principle of *a distinct life*, the spring of its own peculiar faculties and affections; as it will, by and bye, be also the life of its own peculiar and united body (1 Cor. 15: 44). The *sleep* is evidently only of *the body*. (See 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.) For then, the spirit, that which has already been detached from the corruptible body, and gone to Jesus (Acts 7: 59), will take up and seat itself in the glorious body.

This is a blessed truth, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." As one has said, "The person of every believer bears the image of the two Adams." The image of the first Adam is wholly sinful, as Adam was. The image of the Second Adam, distinctly considered, is wholly righteous, as Christ is. This new life, drawn from the Second Adam, Christ, "the quickening Spirit," *is spirit*, the *new creation*, the *new man*, the *inner man*, the *divine nature* in us, *life of the risen Jesus*, which the Holy Ghost can own as *His temple*, to form, and fill, and nourish, and so strengthen with His own might, as to give it to stand in the battle with that which is still in us of the old Adam.

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Thus do we see our own creation in Christ Jesus — and this meditation leads us to another on the Holy Ghost, which I would now for a little pursue. As soon as we become spiritual — or one spirit with Jesus — as joined to Him, we become such as the Holy Ghost can own. And in this age He does so own us. For it is the *Lord* in us whom He thus owns, and Him He can own, of course, everywhere. He could never own or adopt the flesh — and the law never took us out of the flesh — but the word of grace unites us as one spirit to the Lord. Nay, the Holy Ghost did not acknowledge flesh in unfallen Adam, for Adam was not a temple of the Holy Ghost. But He can own even a poor sinner who, by faith, is one with the Son. An *individual* body He owns, just because He finds *the Lord* there (1 Cor. 6: 17-19). Our collective bodies or the church He owns, because, in like manner, He finds the Lord there (Eph. 2: 20, 21). He makes both of these His temple, — dwelling in them because the Lord is there in this age.

And thus the believer is not only "spiritual," as being by faith "one with the Lord." but he becomes a "temple of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost enters and dwells in Him. Then the Spirit bears witness with the believer's spirit (Rom. 8: 16). His own spirit tells him he is a child, because, by faith, he is one with the Son of God's love. And the Holy Spirit joins in this testimony, because He has entered us as owning the Son in us, and thus in us cries or breathes out, "Abba, Father."

But even this "indwelling of the Holy Ghost is matter of revelation. as well as our oneness with the Son, or our being "Spirit." Therefore it is neither to be *prayed for* nor *experienced*, but *believed*. Sweet and refreshing, and purifying fruit of this indwelling will surely be known and enjoyed; and that more or less as we walk in holy diligent cultivation of the spiritual mind and in our communion with God. And that will be our experience. But at first we are not to put the soul, to any effort to experience the indwelling of the Spirit, but to believe the revelation that He does indwell. And the happy way to reach experience is simply to have faith in the revelation. And it is, moreover, on this very ground that our *responsibleness* arises. We are all debtors, under this age, to walk in the Spirit, just because we have the Spirit. Believers in old time were not thus "spiritual" A prophet, or the like, may have been called "spiritual" while the Spirit was in him to prophesy, but that was far different from being "spiritual," in the sense of being indwelt by the Spirit for constant though varied need of the soul.

From all this we gather that the Spirit is imparted by the word of the gospel — that "word" is the seed of new or spiritual life in us, and is received by faith; and then the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in us thus spiritual, or one with the Lord. And this shows us there is *connection*, but not *identity*, between the "word of grace" and the Holy Ghost. The word of grace gives liberty to the sinner, purifies the conscience, makes us one with the Son, and thus prepares us for the entrance and indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

All the elect have been born of the Spirit, have derived their life unto God from the woman's seed, the head of the new creation. But not till Jesus, the Son of man, was glorified, did the Holy Ghost dwell in the elect, as now He does. He was given occasionally, at all times, to God's servants, for official service and testimony (Ex. 31; Num. 11: 27; Deut. 34; 1 Sam. 10; 1 Chr. 28; Neh. 9). That was, however, different. For then, according to the order and notice of Scripture, the Holy Ghost was still *in heaven*, as in Isaiah 48: 16, but now dwelling in, and given to, the saints. He is owned by the same Scriptures of God as on *earth* (Acts 2: 18; 18; Eph. 4; John 14: 16).

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Our meditations thus conduct us through great things of our God, which, however, we must not dismiss till we look at *resurrection*, which, with its results, is to be the great presentation of the blessed and wondrous purpose of our God.

God's secret I judge to have been resurrection from the beginning. That which He graciously calls "my covenant" was established on that principle. It shows itself in God's dealing with *Adam*. It was intimated by the very first promise of the woman's seed, for that was something above nature, above flesh and blood. It was, as the prophet calls it, "a new thing in the earth." And though the Son of God became the woman's seed by *incarnation*, yet, in the mighty results of that, and in the character of the Bruiser of the serpent's head, indeed in all that we now enjoy, either of His person. or His work, it is in resurrection we know Him. As the apostle says, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more." And accordingly we are now, even in this first promise about the woman's seed bruising the serpent, to have respect to Christ in resurrection, for there, and there only, the full fruit and issue of that bruising is to be enjoyed. And afterwards resurrection is connected with God's secret or covenant in His dealing with Noah. "The end of all flesh is come before me. Make thee

an Ark of gopher wood." Here again resurrection was God's relief *or resource* when He took cognizance of the utter corruption of all flesh in His sight. For the ark was the chariot of God's salvation conducting Noah out of the old into the new creation. It was plainly the symbol of death and resurrection. "Every thing in the earth shall die," says the Lord to Noah, "but with thee will I establish my covenant;" thus revealing the secret that His covenant, His purpose touching this creation, was to establish it in some condition after death had ruined it, or on the ground of resurrection.

So in His dealings with *Abraham*. Abraham was to have a son and an inheritance on the same principle. He and Sarah were without children, and without so much ground as to set his foot upon. But he was to have a seed as numerous as the stars, and an inheritance that was to stretch northward and southward, eastward and westward. And this was all called "God's covenant" with him, again plainly telling us that God's purpose, or secret, or covenant, rested on resurrection, rested on the setting aside the flesh in its strength and resources, in doing something beyond and above nature, which is the same as resurrection, or the quickening of the dead and strengthless body of Sarah. And accordingly Isaac is born out of the dead bodies of Abraham and Sarah. With Isaac is God's covenant. Ishmael may be blest — as he is — but with Isaac, and Isaac alone, is the covenant, plainly again telling us that God has taken *resurrection* as the principle of His action, the ground of His counsels. Man may receive blessing in *nature*, it is true, and in the divine overflowings of goodness such Ishmael promises are enjoyed every day, but *the covenant* is with Isaac. The real abiding and sure blessing is all, not in nature, or mere flesh, but in resurrection.

And the *inheritance* comes in the way of resurrection as well as the *seed or heir*. It lay under the bondage of corruption for a time. It was in the hand of the Amorite while he was filling up the measure of his sin. But then it is rescued from such a pit of corruption. It passes through its baptism or circumcision. It, and all its fruits, go through a process of sanctification. Like a leprous house, it is cleansed by the dead and living birds, and thus, as in resurrection, it is fit for the people who were in covenant with God; a risen inheritance becomes a risen people, and Canaan was thus a sample of the whole creation, which is now as dead in corruption, but to be raised in glory (Rom. 8).

The dispensation of the law then takes its course. But it was not God's covenant. It was man's covenant, because it took flesh and blood for its principle. It was flesh and blood, or the strength of the natural man which is addressed or operated on, and thus it was *man's* covenant and not God's. But it ended in the full conviction that man could get no blessing from it.

God is then manifest in the flesh. The Son of God becomes incarnate. In His own person He stands untainted. He renders to God a beautiful offering of perfect human fruit. Flesh and blood in His person was the loveliest piece of creation God ever looked on. It was indeed a meat-offering, an unleavened sheaf out of the earth. But it must be set aside ere the head of the serpent can be bruised by this promised and precious seed of the woman. Not, however, set aside like flesh and blood in all beside as *worthless*, but set aside by a *meritorious death*, that by death this woman's seed might destroy him that had the power of death, the old serpent who had brought death. And such is the end of flesh and blood in the Son of God. And therefore, in it, we are not to know Him any more. We are to know even Christ Himself now as dead and risen (2 Cor. 5), the Lord of a new creation, up to which He has won His way by fully meeting all the penalty which the old creation has incurred; and in which new creation we (by faith in His atonement and victory for sinners accomplished by His death) stand with Him, a dead and risen people, the true circumcision, who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

And I cannot close without alluding to a blessed instance of the Lord retiring to thoughts of

resurrection as His relief, when He looked on the end of flesh. I mean in His visit to Jerusalem. (See Mark 11) He came down to Jerusalem. He looked on man then as of old He had looked on him in the days of Noah. But all was evil. And He said of it, represented in the barren fig tree, "No fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever." And having pronounced this doom on flesh, even in Jerusalem, the most favoured nursery of it, He went out to Bethany. And what was Bethany but the witness to resurrection? There Lazarus was, who had actually been raised; and there Mary was, who had the faith of the resurrection. So that Bethany was the same relief to the thoughts of Jesus now, as the Ark of gopher wood had been to His thoughts in the days of Noah.

And touching all this, faith is our duty. For faith takes us into God's counsels about the covenant. Faith says, as God says, "the end of all flesh is come before me," and resurrection, the Ark of gopher wood, becomes the believer's object or resource, as it is God's. It is the thing we look for, as it is the thing that the blessed God has purposed and promised. And thus faith takes us into God and His secret. Precious faith, we may well call it, that thus takes us up in spirit to that light in which the mind of God dwells, and in confidence to that work which God has accomplished.

And precious hope which carries us beyond the present Ishmael blessings of nature, and gives us desire for the inheritance in resurrection according to *God*. Creation is but the avenue or ante-room. Without faith in resurrection "the power of *God*" is not known (Matt. 22: 29), "knowledge of *God*". is not attained (1 Cor. 15: 34), for creation did not, show God *fully* — but redemption, leading to resurrection, does.

But ere we leave this mystery of resurrection, I would look at the mind of the Spirit in 2 Cor. 5, as connected with it.

There is, I believe, in the opening of that chapter an allusion to the tabernacle and the temple, which were successively the dwelling-places of the Ark. The tabernacle conducted it through the wilderness, and it was a temporary thing made of clothes and boards, all liable to be soiled and torn, and broken in their passage. The temple in due time received it in the land, and then it entered its abiding place, which nothing could move or injure. And this temple was just as costly to the eye as the tabernacle had been unattractive. The tabernacle had appeared but as a dirty badger-skin house, for all the glory was then concealed, but the temple now appeared full of magnificence to every beholder. "See what manner of stones and what buildings are here."

But withal, they both contained *the very same ark*. It was conveyed from one to another, as being the chief thing round which all else, be it unsightly or glorious, gathered. And so with us, as the Apostle here intimates. We have the earnest of the Spirit, we have life of God in us, life from Jesus, the quickening Spirit, and the Holy Ghost Himself dwelling in us — and this is the great thing after all. This is as the ark, to which all, whether tabernacle or temple, was but secondary. This is the present glorious tenant of our vile body," the earthly house of this tabernacle by and bye to be the glorious inmate of the "glorious body, the house of God not made with hands." The *same* ark, the *same* Christ, the *same* Spirit. And by this God shows that He already owns us as decidedly or simply as ever He will. "He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God." God has put His hand to us already; God has got His own interest or kingdom in us even now, just as God had appropriated the tabernacle to Himself, unsightly as it was, as surely as He afterwards did the beautiful temple.

And this is the simple joy of faith, that God has already laid His hand on us, and put His glory in us, so that it is His interest and His care to *preserve us*, according to which the Spirit given is "*the earnest*," as He is here called.

And in passing through these verses, the apostle, I judge, glances at Adam as created. "Since that,

being clothed, we shall not be found naked." Adam was naked. His nakedness, it is true, expressing his unconsciousness or innocency, but expressing his exposure or liability also; for, being *only* a creature, he was open to the assaults of the enemy. But when the saint reaches the house of God, then it will not be nakedness or exposure, but clothing and security. Then it will not be a mere creature, but a creature thus enclosed, as it were, in God's own workmanship, he himself wrought by God for a house built by God. And being thus clothed, there will be no nakedness, no liabilities any more. It will not be Adam again. And from this our apostle seems to draw a great inference. In ver. 16 he says, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh." He had surveyed resurrection. He had looked in spirit at the temple in contrast with the tabernacle. The eternal house in contrast with the earthly house. He had owned God as the builder of that temple, and as the Giver of the Spirit to dwell in it for ever. He had longed for the clothing of glory as something far beyond even the nakedness of innocency. And under the light and sense of all this, he now loses sight of flesh or old creation. He cannot return to it. He has seen "a glory that excelleth." He has seen resurrection or new creation in Christ, the Son of God, outshining all the old thing as begun in earth and in flesh. He cannot look again at flesh; yea, Christ Himself in the flesh has been outshone by Christ in resurrection. Christ in flesh had been lovely, it is true, the loveliest piece of the old creation that had ever been presented. It had a glory — as the law had a glory — but like the glory of the law, that glory of Christ in the flesh was now outshone, and the apostle had turned from it to the "more excellent" glory. Paul, as it were, could give up Christ in *the flesh*, when he got this view of resurrection.

And having taken before us this place, having shown himself in this attitude of soul, he shortly tells us the main character of this object that was now filling his vision, the feature of this new creation in the Son of God, which was now spread around him. That it was a grand system of reconciliation, devised and perfected by God Himself; by which, even now, the rebellious might enjoy in spirit a full return to God through Jesus, and walk before Him, not in the distance, and darkness, and death of their own condition in sin, but in the light and liberty, the assurance and joy of his own righteousness.

This was the Present aspect of the new creation, by and bye to be perfected in that state of resurrection to which he had been before looking, and the light of which had, as we saw, led him to these present thoughts. And such will be our eternity, shining in the righteousness of God with glorious bodies; living, moving, and having our being, not in Adam or flesh, but in Christ, and in glory. And at last there will be the new heavens and the new earth," the former things will all have past away. Even the kingdom will be given up, and God" will be "all in all."

He that sat upon the throne said, "Behold I make all things new."